

# EDINBURGH CHAMBERS' JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, EDITORS OF "CHAMBERS'S INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE,"  
"CHAMBERS'S EDUCATIONAL COURSE," &c.

NUMBER 603.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 1843.

PRICE 1½d.

## LOW LIFE.

PART I.

ABOUT five-and-twenty miles south of London, there is a town which is not in the immediate vicinity of any railroad: the consequence is, that it retains its primitive appearance. The principal inn is an old-fashioned house conducted by old-fashioned people; the landlady, though more than middle-aged, is comely in person, and in manners—what is understood by comfortable; the waiter, though efficient, performs his duties on the slow and sure principle. The chambermaid is discreet not only in her personal demeanour, but in her professional conduct; always putting down the stock gallantries of travellers with the severe virtue of five-and-forty, and never having been once convicted of a damp sheet. Finally, there is an ostler; one of the few members of that fraternity not swept from the face of the road by the gradual abolition of post horses. The modern traveller, on entering the "Blue Lion and Post-Boy," would say, from the quiet which reigns in it, that it was not a very flourishing concern; but he would be quite mistaken.

About two o'clock one summer's day, the usual serenity of the inn was disturbed by the loud clatter of a trotting horse, suddenly pulled up at the door. Its rider instantly dismounted, and rung the ostler's bell with a degree of violence which woke the landlady out of her after-dinner nap. On the appearance of the horse-keeper, the equestrian threw him the bridle, and ordering a feed of corn to be got ready, declared he would see the animal fed. Having expressed in strong language an extreme aversion to being "done" in any manner whatsoever, the traveller strode into the coffee-room.

His orders to the waiter were soon given. All he wanted was "a cut at the cold meat," and a salad, in which the onions were not on any account to be forgotten. He did not care about potatoes; but pastry, Cheshire cheese, and a pint of stout, were indispensable. He would also be glad of a "thimbleful" of brandy, to see what it was like before he ordered his grog, for he made it a point never to be humbugged respecting that important article. After heartily regaling himself with the viands, he was drinking his brandy and water—which, for the credit of the inn be it spoken, appeared to be quite to his satisfaction—when a young and somewhat gentlemanlike man entered the room, and accosted him with, "So, Jemmy, you are punctual."

"I should think so," replied Mr James Juniper, grasping his friend's hand.

During the operation of shaking hands, Frederick Egerton eyed his friend's apparel with a look of disappointment. He had, in fact, invited Mr Juniper to a dinner party, which was to take place at his mother's residence, about a mile from the town, and the guest's costume did not exactly coincide with the general notions of "dress," though it was in exact accordance with his own. He wore a brown coat, plentifully adorned with gilt buttons, a very blue stock, embroidered with gold stars, drab inexpressibles, and a white hat. This finery Egerton was about to introduce to his mother and family, who—always in the habit of complying with the "outward shows" of society themselves—were apt to be startled when they saw them departed from by others. He therefore felt rather nervous about the result of the introduction; the more so when Mr Juniper threw out hints that he would not in the least object to another glass of grog. "You see," he remarked, with a knowing wink at the remains of his meal on a sideboard, "I was not a-going to be done. O no. I know what you nobby people's

dinners are—flimsy, Frenchified, and no mistake—so I took care to lay in something substantial. What time does the old lady feed?"

"We dine at five," replied Egerton; "so, as there is not too much time left for a quiet walk to our house, we will, if you please, start at once."

"All right. I'm ready," answered the guest, jumping up and pushing on his hat with a smart knock on the crown. The two friends immediately commenced their walk arm in arm; but as they sauntered to Bloomleigh cottage slowly, we will outstrip them, and see what is going on before they arrive.

Mrs Egerton's house was beautifully situated, and was in itself the model of a cottage residence. Elegance and good taste pervaded it within and without. The grounds, though small, were laid out to the best advantage, the sloping lawn terminating in a well-kept parterre, bounded on every side by a thick shrubbery. At the moment that Egerton and his friend started from the "Blue Lion," his sister, accompanied by his school-fellow, Sir Lionel Bellamy, were engaged in deep conversation as they slowly threaded the sinuous walks of the garden. Though what they said seemed absorbingly interesting to themselves, it would be useless to repeat it here; the conversation of lovers seldom proving amusing to third persons. Another pair, however, seated near a window which opened upon the lawn, were engaged in converse of a less confidential character. They were Mrs Egerton and Dr Templeton, a London physician to whom her son Frederick was an articled pupil. Something unpleasant to Mrs Egerton had just been communicated, for she sighed heavily.

"The fact is, my dear Mrs Egerton," continued the doctor, "Fred, though a very good fellow in the main, got bitten, before he came under my care, with a mania for low life. He betrays a positive preference for persons of vulgar habits."

"It is to me unaccountable," remarked the lady; "for the company we have always accustomed him to is rather above than below our station in life: the habits we have striven that he should form are those of rigid correctness rather than loose vulgarity."

"Very true; and therein, perhaps, lies the secret of his vitiated tastes," returned Dr Templeton. "When he first went to London from college to walk the hospitals, he found himself suddenly removed from those restraints which your habits of life, and the good society to which he had always been accustomed, necessarily imposed. He found a charm in the contrast, and is now deeply enamoured of the social liberty to be obtained in pot-houses and among free-and-easy companions."

"It is most distressing," continued the lady sorrowfully, "for more reasons than those which directly affect himself. His sister's happiness is evidently absorbed in his welfare; it is sometimes painful to observe the degree of affection she feels for him. Besides, if Frederick persevere in his career of low-lived dissipation, we shall be seriously compromised with Sir Lionel's family, to which Marion is to be allied."

"But you despair too soon, my dear madam: Fred is to be cured yet, I am sure, and all that lies in my power shall be done to bring him to his senses. One scheme shall be put into action this very day. The friend whom he has gone to meet at the inn is his *fidus Achates*; and that the shock may not be too great for you when he arrives, let me tell you a little about him."

"I trust he will behave himself with decency," said Mrs Egerton, somewhat alarmed at the doctor's exordium.

"You shall judge when I have described him. Mr James Juniper began his career as a student of the veterinary art, in which he made, it must be owned, such progress, that he now—by the sacrifices of a mother whose whole existence is bound up in him—transfers his studies to the knowledge and cure of the human subject. His mother is the widow of the veterinary surgeon of a hussar regiment, and imposes severe privations not only upon herself, but her daughter."

"Has my son's friend a sister too?" interrupted Mrs Egerton, her terrors increasing.

"Yes; and what is more alarming to us all, madam, a lovely sister; as your son would, if called upon, testify in the warmest terms. These two uncomplaining patient females endure, I have reason to know, infinite misery to support this dissipated youth in his extravagances."

"But why allow Frederick to bring such a monster, here?"

"I will tell you; it will be a lesson to him. Mr Juniper will, I am sure, commit himself to some gross ill-breeding, which will, I hope, open Fred's eyes, and help to cure him of his love for low companions."

At this moment Marion and Sir Lionel appeared upon the lawn, and the conversation ceased. As they approached the window, the gate bell announced that Frederick and his friend had arrived.

On entering the grounds, Mr Juniper knocked off the heads of a few flowers with his riding whip, and bethinking himself of the dust on his boots, removed it with his pocket handkerchief while crossing the lawn. The servant who received the young host and his guest in the hall, tried to get possession of Mr Juniper's hat, in which he succeeded after a slight struggle. When, however, the lacquey endeavoured to dispossess him of his whip, Mr Juniper positively declined to part with it, making a pointed reference to the value of its silver mountings, and adding a mysterious allusion to some individual named "Walker."

Thus accoutred, as if for a horse-race, Mr Juniper was led into the drawing-room. Having been introduced by Egerton to the persons assembled, he sat down as if glad to escape notice, after carefully tucking the whip under his arm. Sir Lionel, whom Miss Egerton prepared for the kind of person he would meet, had evidently not underrated Juniper's eccentricities by anticipation; but Marion keenly sympathised with the mortification her brother already felt.

During dinner, Egerton had ample cause for fresh discomfiture. On being invited by Sir Lionel to take a glass of wine, Juniper endeavoured to show how cordially he appreciated the pleasure, by declaring "he didn't mind making it two if that was all." He had been told that fashionable persons deemed it vulgar to eat much at dinner, so he determined to be ultra-genteel by refusing everything eatable offered to him, paying most of his attention to the liquors. At length he swallowed some meat: though, when the pastry appeared, he made good his losses by demolishing all that came within his reach. When the tankard was handed round he nearly emptied its contents, remarking, with a smack of the lips, that "malt" was the liquor for his money. On the removal of the cloth, he wondered whether it would be safe to use a tooth-pick, and speculated on the probability of cigars and brandy and water. The retirement of the ladies, aided by the hock, sherry, and porter he had drunk at dinner, gave Mr Juniper's conversational powers a fillip, and as he was best acquainted with horses, he entered into that subject with great

spirit. He enlightened Sir Lionel on the art of "firing" a lame horse and selling it as a sound one, kindly enquiring his services to the young baronet, whenever he should wish to "do" a young baronet in the manner described. At length, to Egerton's inexpressible relief, an adjournment to the drawing-room took place; though that proved only a momentary respite from his torments. The manner in which Mr Juniper rose from his seat caused a suspicion as to the state of his brain, which was not a little strengthened on the stairs, where he got into familiar conversation with the servant touching the safety of his silver-mounted whip, when, being perfectly satisfied on that point, he condescendingly tapped the lacquy on the back, and called him a "brick."

Though quite abashed at the beginning of the entertainment, Mr Juniper's natural effrontery did not long absent itself. It completely returned to him in the drawing-room. He tried a series of compliments upon the ladies, which, though coarse, were amusing. Mrs Egerton, he said, bore her age wonderfully; for he dared say she was sixty-two. Of Miss Egerton's personal charms, he remarked that Miss Raver the actress was not fit to hold a candle to them, though that accomplished young lady was the tragic heroine of an elegant place of amusement in Lambeth. Nor did he confine his patronage to his female friends, but expressed his approbation of Dr Templeton as a lecturer, and flattered Sir Lionel upon his knowledge of horse-flesh. At length his loquacity was becoming so tiresome and offensive, that Mrs Egerton drew her son aside, and begged of him to withdraw his new friend from the house. For this a good opportunity soon occurred. Juniper privately inquired of his friend if the old lady "stood anything with the chill off after coffee;" and Frederick, knowing what he meant, answered in the negative, stating, that whatever brandy and water, with cigars, he may want, must be enjoyed at the "Blue Lion." Whereupon Mr Juniper wished the party good evening, and deeming an excuse was necessary for leaving so early, said he had important business to transact at the "house where he put up."

While Frederick accompanied his guest to the inn, the family circle was naturally engaged in deploring his bad taste for keeping the company of such persons as Mr James Juniper. It was thought, however, that his present mortification—to be heightened by a severe lecture from the doctor on his return—would have a good effect. The reader will, however, observe the impression that was made upon him, when we inform him what occurred about a month after. To this end the scene must be changed.

In a back-room of a house in Lant Street, Southwark, not far from Guy's hospital, a family was seated at breakfast. It consisted of a widow, her son, and daughter. The son, whose morning costume was minus a coat, bore the broken-down appearance of a person unaccustomed to regular rest, and whose habits were by no means sober. The daughter, on the contrary, was neatly, though poorly dressed; her apparel betraying considerable effort to make that appear decent which was worn out. The same may be said of the mother's attire. Grief was seated in the faces of the females; the young man seemed sorrowful also, but there was a reckless levity mixed with his depression but little in sympathy with those around him.

"Well, I can't help it," he began, "if the broker does take the sticks; it is no fault of mine."

"You might," replied the mother mildly, "have been more economical during the time you have studied at the hospital. Your sister's earnings and my own little income have nearly all been absorbed by you."

"I am obliged to do as others do," replied the youth. "Besides, have I not introduced you to a good lodger, and Lás to a rich lover?" At this allusion the girl left the table, and busied herself with needlework to hide her tears. Mrs Juniper (for it was she) again chid her son, and he, declaring he wasn't going to sit there to be scolded, put on his coat and departed.

A stranger meeting Mr Juniper on his way to the hospital, would not have judged from his appearance and demeanour that those who ought to have been most dear to him were in danger of being deprived of their home for the want of means to pay its rent, having been reduced to penury through his improvidence. When he joined his fellow-students, he was the gayest of the group. Egerton—the lodger and lover before alluded to—was of the number; and after having borrowed some money of him, Juniper proposed a dining excursion to the west end "after lecture."

Accordingly, about eleven o'clock that evening, several young gentlemen issued from a well-known ordinary in Westminster. They sallied forth four

abreast in that pleasing state of exhilaration which betrays itself in several curious eccentricities, which the actors themselves seem to enjoy much better than the persons acted upon. Consequently, the amusements were diversified by various disputes with passers-by, who, objecting to be tripped up or otherwise annoyed, ventured an occasional expostulation. This, however, seldom proved effective without a threat of the police, at which the facetious party invariably separated in great haste, from a dread of the station-house. By this sort of prudence in danger, they managed at last to assemble at one of the musical taverns near Covent Garden. Here their pent-up mirth found full vent. Mr Juniper, who headed the party, being on speaking terms with the leading "professionals," kindly introduced his friend Egerton to them—an honour acknowledged in each case by a particular inquiry as to what extent the gentleman was willing to stand treat? And Mr Juniper always answering for his friend "whatever they pleased," the singers chose to clear their throats with punch, a great many bowls of which Egerton had the pleasure of paying for. The large share of this beverage imbibed by Juniper was not long in taking effect upon him; after each "vocal effort," he insisted upon indulging the company with specimens of his own musical abilities, and was so pertinacious in his attempts to do so, and Egerton and his friends were so noisy in their support of his pretensions, that the whole party were turned out of the tavern by force. The conduct of these young gentlemen was not sufficiently refined for their company; for every sort of society has its rules of etiquette, and the code laid down in the lowest tap-rooms is seldom sinned against with impunity.

The air had its usual effect upon the intoxicated. The young men, having more scope for uproar in the streets, indulged in it to the fullest extent; and were, moreover, guilty of certain silly pranks, for no other reason than because one or two of the aristocracy sowed their wild-oats in the same manner. The party had made a moderate collection of knockers and bell-handles, when, not content with those prize-worthy exploits, they destroyed several baskets of fruit, which were on their way to market, upon a poor woman's head. The police, whom they had hitherto escaped, now came up, and a fierce encounter ensued. Egerton and several of his friends fought desperately, while Juniper, sobered by the fright, sneaked to the edge of the crowd, and made such severe remarks on the inhumane and violent conduct of the brawlers, that he escaped detection as their companion; till, finding a good opportunity, he finally made off. Egerton and three others were secured, and locked up in the station-house.

It was early morning when the reveller turned homeward. His personal appearance was in striking contrast to its spruceness on the preceding evening. His feelings had also undergone a change. The strongest animal spirits will not endure a whole night of drinking, laughing, and shouting; and when every particle of enjoyment is gone, there is nothing left but remorse. This was Mr Juniper's case. Worn out with fatigue, dissatisfied with himself for his conduct at the police encounter, suffering bitterly from headache and nausea, he began to think that, after all, this was not perhaps the best way to enjoy life, particularly as it tended to break the hearts of an affectionate mother and sister. It is in such moments that those changes of character take place from which reformations are dated. Perhaps, in Juniper's case, the impression might have worn off in a little time, if nothing had occurred to make it deeper; but, when he reached home, he found ample cause for further repentance. His mother and sister—already reduced to want—were on the eve of being deprived of every article of property that belonged to them. A man was placed in possession of the furniture of their house, and the brightest prospect which appeared before them was homeless penury, the widow being in the first place threatened with a prison. Her son could not conceal from himself that this was his work. No word of upbraiding, however, was addressed to him. His sister, a meek yet firm-minded girl, was steadily preparing for the departure which was now inevitable. The mother, merely expressing a mild regret that he was from home when the broker's warrant arrived, began recounting her plans for the future with that calmness which the deepest of griefs can only impart. In these plans he saw that—unworthy criminal as he was—his own well-being was consulted with the same sacrificing spirit that had brought the family to their present wretchedness. These disclosures, unaccompanied by a single reproach, wrought new and powerful emotions in the prodigal's mind. Vain were his endeavours to combat them—he burst into tears; and falling into his mother's arms, begged her forgiveness.

The widow and her daughter not long before were sunk into the lowest depths of despair. Now, however, they declared, with tears of joy, that this was the brightest moment of their existence.

### THE MILITARY FRONTIER OF AUSTRIA.

THE Austrian empire is separated from that of Turkey by a boundary line, the chief portion of which is marked by the river Danube, and one of its affluents, the Save. The frontier is divided into four districts, named after the countries which form the southern portion of the empire; they are the Western or Croatian, the Slavonian, the Hungarian, and the Transylvanian military frontiers. The whole line, extending to a thousand miles, is constantly watched and guarded by what has been not untruly called a living rampart. A cordon of sentries is maintained upon this southern edge of the empire, consisting of six thousand soldiers, or about six soldiers to every mile; and when any peculiar danger demands increased vigilance, eight, and sometimes twelve thousand men are placed upon duty. The peculiar feature of the arrangement is, however, the system of self-support on which it is established. The property of a mere strip of the border land, comprising only eighteen thousand square miles, may be said to sustain this guard, so useful as a protection to all the rest of the empire. The great duty of the soldiers is, of course, to defend the country in time of war; but it also serves, in peace, as a custom-house guard, and for the enforcement of quarantine regulations, with a view to preventing the intrusion of the plague. The history and existing system of the Austrian military frontier, as something unique in Europe, may be expected to have some interest for our readers.

Anciently, the lands of civilisation lay south of the Danube. Egypt, Greece, Rome, and Turkey, were the resting-places of social refinement in its onward progress, and a frontier line similar to that we are now describing was formed by the Byzantine emperors along the southern bank of the river, to protect their dominions from the incursions of the northern barbarians. At the present time the tables are turned. Civilisation, having once crossed the Danube, made so rapid a march, that a military frontier on the opposite shore was established to check the incursions of those who are now regarded as the southern barbarians. The history of the Austrian frontier commences during the ascendancy of the Turks, when, in spite of their vigilance, the banks of the Save and the Danube were infested with bands of Servians, who lived by war and plunder, and sought refuge on the Hungarian territories. At length, many of these fugitives from the neighbouring countries were received by the Hungarians (who then formed a separate state), on condition of defending the frontier on which they lived from further incursion. It was not, however, till the fall of Hungary, and its junction with the Austrian empire, at the battle of Mohacs, in 1525, that this curious military institution was regularly established. For two hundred years after that period, the frontier soldiers were of singular use, for, during the whole of the two centuries, the plains of Hungary were the theatre of a warfare by the Germans under the emperors of Austria against the Turks. It was the emperor Ferdinand, brother of Charles V., who first commenced the organisation. Having garrisoned the districts of Croatia which border on Styria, with German soldiers to protect his new kingdom of Hungary against the aggressions of the Turks, he caused them to discipline the Servian and Croatian fugitives from Turkey, whom he endowed with lands, on condition of their serving as frontier guards against the Turks. At length by this arrangement the eighteen thousand square miles of boundary has been gradually made to consist of lands held as fiefs on the tenure chiefly of military, but also of a few civil services. The apportionment of the land is thus explained by Mr Paget:—"From thirty-six to fifty acres constitutes an entire fief, the half or quarter constituting half and quarter fiefs. Each of them is bound to furnish and to maintain and clothe, according to its size, one or more men-at-arms. In order to carry out this plan, the fiefs are given to families composed of several members, of which the eldest is the *House-father*, and the younger are the men-at-arms. The *House-father*, and his wife, the *House-mother*, have the direction of the farm, the care of the house, the duty of providing for the necessities of the whole family, and the right to control and watch over their industry and morals. On the other hand, the rest of the men of the family must be consulted on any great changes, as purchases and sales,

\* "Tour in Hungary and Transylvania."



and at the end of the year they may demand an account of the expenditure from the House-father. No man who has been punished for a crime can be a House-father; and if he be habitually drunken or immoral, he loses the right which age would otherwise have given him. The family owe him obedience and respect. A portion of land called *Uberland*—land over and above the quantity required for the fiefs—and any excess of cattle or production, may be sold with the consent of a superior officer. All the members of the family are allowed to marry, and marriage is even held out to them as an honourable duty. When a family becomes rich or too large, its members are allowed to divide, and the party separating receives another fief, either by grant or purchase of *Uberland*, within the frontier district, which then becomes a feudal fief. Such as leave the frontier service have no right in the property of the family. The land is cultivated for the common good of all the members of a family; and the profit, if any remains after the taxes and other expenses are defrayed, is divided among them. No individual is allowed to keep cattle, or to work for his own exclusive profit—at least without permission of the rest. In most cases, a whole family, consisting of many married couples, with their children, sometimes to the number of fifty individuals, live under the same roof, cultivate the same land, eat at the same table, and obey the same father. The military duty, in time of peace, consists in watching the frontiers. For this purpose the man-at-arms repairs to the station for seven days at a time, where the family supply him with food. Besides this, he has the duty of transporting letters, as well as the money and baggage of the regiment, and of performing exercises. For the manual exercise four days a month are required, from October to March. In spring and autumn the company exercises together for a week; and at longer intervals the whole regiment encamps out, and manœuvres together. Every family is divided into invalids, half-invalids, enrolled, and youths. Every man of full age, who has not some bodily failing, is enrolled. In time of war, the borderer must form part of the regular army, and march out of the country if required. The regular disposable force amounts to 34,827; but if the reserved and *Landwehr* (cultivators) are called out, to 100,000. If driven to the last extremity, they can muster to the amount of 200,000 men. By means of alarm-fires and bells, this immense force can be summoned together through the whole extent of the frontier in the space of four hours.

The borderers are divided into seven regiments, according to the district they occupy—six infantry, and one hussar. Besides these, there is a division of *Tschakisten*, so called from the wooden boxes, set on piles, and furnished with open galleries round them, in which they keep guard along the morasses of the Save and the Danube. Like the peasant, the border family has to do civil service—one day per annum for every English acre—for the state; as in the repair of high roads and bridges, draining of swamps, regulating rivers, repairing public buildings, &c.: and eight days per annum for the village; as in building churches and school-houses, keeping the village roads in order, cutting wood for the school, and working the farms of widows and orphans. The borderer's chief tax, besides the furnishing the uniform for a man-at-arms (the shoes, arms, and leather-work are given by the government, as well as twelve shillings a-year in aid of the rest) is the land-tax, amounting for an entire fief to from fifteen to thirty shillings per annum. Tradesmen, artisans, and Jews, pay, according to their property, from eight shillings to four pounds a-year. The border officers have many duties peculiar to the position of feudal superiors, which they occupy. They give consent to marriages; their permission is necessary to the sale and transfer of property, real or personal; and at times they act as judges and ministers of police. From the mixed nature of the borderer's duty, different descriptions of officers are required; and we accordingly find officers of economy, to direct the farming processes—architects and surveyors, &c., for the care of public property.

"Many laws of the borderers are framed in a spirit of paternal kindness; among others, those for the encouragement of industry, the inducing to the accumulation of wealth, and the preservation of order and agreement in families, besides institutions for the maintenance of the widows and orphans, and for the education and improvement of the people. Benign states, that of the children between seven and twelve years old on the Transylvanian frontiers, 1806 out of 9077 boys, and 3444 out of 7103 girls, were provided with the elements of education in the border schools. In Hungary the proportion is still higher: probably nine-tenths of the whole can read and write in one or two languages. The administration of justice seems to be yet more favourably organised. The first tribunal in civil cases is formed by a lieutenant of economy, two sergeants and two corporals of economy, and two house-fathers chosen by the colonel. Their judgments must be confirmed by the captain. In criminal cases, the court-martial, composed, however, of officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers, decides."

Mr Khol, in his "Hundred Days in Austria," gives an amusing account of a night he passed at one of the

military posts of the Austrian frontier.\* As travelling on the Danube is not allowed at night, he was obliged towards evening to quit his boat, and to surrender himself a prisoner for one night to the 13th military post of the Illyrico-Wallachian frontier regiment. "The sentry-house, or *tshardak*," he says, "stood on the height immediately overlooking the sands. It had two divisions, one for the watch-fire, and the other for the soldiers to sleep in. Before this little shed, under the projecting roof, the men had piled their arms. There were six or seven soldiers at the *tshardak*, and their dress, like their political constitution, was half military and half peasant-like. Over the usual peasant's frock they wore knapsacks fastened to a leathern strap. Their legs were wrapped in linen or woollen cloths, and their feet covered with those sandals, fastened with red bindings, common to most Eastern Slavonian nations. They wore peasants' caps, and most of them had a knife sticking in the girdle. Those who were on watch marched up and down before the *tshardak* with a very unsoldierly gait, and with the long musket thrown clumsily over the shoulder. For the cordon service on which these men are employed they are admirably fitted; on parade they would certainly not show to advantage. They are truly a *rusticorum mascula militum proles*—(a hardy race of rustic soldiers)."

As we were sitting round the fire, the cry of the sentinel, "Hold! who goes?" was heard. It was a messenger with a letter. The corporal immediately despatched one of the soldiers with it to the next post. In a little while the sentinel hailed again. "A friend" was the reply. It was a patrol sent out by the chiefs of the cordon, to see that all was right at the different posts. Sometimes these chiefs themselves make the circuit from post to post, without any previous warning. Once more the unwearied sentinel repeated his challenge, and received a friendly answer. It was the new guard come to relieve the others. No soldiers remain more than seven days together at a sentry post; they are then relieved by six or seven others, who likewise remain a week. Every soldier spends ninety days of the year on guard at these places. Each of the new comers had in his knapsack a bag containing seven oaks of flour, their sole provision for the seven days. Some of them had also a little powdered sheep's cheese; and some of them, though not many, were even without salt—at least so they assured us. Salt is very dear upon the military frontier, though extremely abundant on the Turkish side. The soldiers look with longing eyes upon the ship-loads of fine green salt which pass along the Turkish side of the river, and there is probably a little smuggling carried on in so tempting an article. The soldiers had come very far that day, having set off early in the morning. They were very tired, and after throwing their thick brown cloaks over their weapons, they stretched themselves on the ground before the *tshardak*, and immediately fell asleep. I never saw so little accommodation for a week's lodging. Their arms alone received any care or attention. We asked them why they did not sleep within the *tshardak*, but they replied that it swarmed with mice and vermin, and that they always preferred sleeping in the open air. The hardships and privations to which the daily life of these hardy and courageous men is exposed, even under the most favourable circumstances, is almost incredible. What must it be when bad weather renders the country entirely impassable, and shuts them up in the miserable *tshardak*, and when the mere keeping of their weapons in good condition requires incessant labour and care! But when the alarm-bell beats from the chief sentry-houses, when signal fires are lighted from the heights, when perhaps a robbery is proclaimed, and the soldiery have to roam the country for days together in search of banditti, to recover perhaps some miserable cloaks and guns, then the frontier soldier is quite in his element! Then he sings the warlike songs of his country, and shouts the praises of the Austrian emperor, for privation and hardship are not felt by the hardy borderer, and war and tumult are his delight.

While I still sat on the shores of the Danube, making reflections upon the importance of the military frontier, the first gray light of morning began to dawn. The old corporal, giving up his post to his successor, took his departure with his soldiers. I observed that each soldier, as he went away, carefully took his cartridge from his gun-barrel, and put it into his cartridge-box. This is on account of the scanty supply of ammunition allowed to the frontier soldiers. On the military frontier, no unnecessary shot must ever be fired; the cartridges are sparingly dealt out, and must be used with equal parsimony. They are sometimes put three or four times into the gun, and then drawn out again, for the soldier must never go armed into the interior of the country. To any one not acquainted with these circumstances, the fuss made about a missing or spoilt cartridge sometimes appears highly ridiculous."

The work here accomplished by Austria, and indeed by all Germany—for it was by the help of money and troops, supplied by the rest of Germany, that the Austrian government was enabled to place the military frontier on its present secure and complete footing—has been of the greatest service to the whole of Europe. This effective and energetic institution has formed a permanent rampart against the Turks,

and preserved Europe from that dreadful disease to which it was so long subject, and which still rages throughout the East. If, in these times of peace, the frontier continues to advance in a rapidly progressive course of civilisation and prosperity, it will perhaps gradually lose its military character, and blend with the rest of the peaceful and industrious community.

## POKINGS ABOUT LONDON.

### PENTONVILLE PRISON.

On the day succeeding that in which I had been conducted over the magnificent establishment spoken of in a previous paper, my taste for sight-seeing brought me to the door of an institution very different in its nature, and into which it is somewhat more difficult for a stranger to gain an entrance than into any of the club-houses. I allude to the prison at Pentonville, which can scarcely be said to be yet generally known as one of the lions of London, for it is only of recent erection, and is not exhibited without an order from the secretary of state.

On the right of the long road leading from Pentonville to Holloway, in the northern environs of the metropolis, stands this extensive suite of buildings—all of brick, of lofty dimensions, and of good architectural taste. Occupying the top of a rising ground, the situation is airy and salubrious, while the construction is such as enlightened views of prison-discipline point out as desirable. Panting from an exceedingly hot walk up the dusty acclivity, my companion and I were glad to find refuge under the high portico in front of the building, and to present our credentials to the officer in attendance. A few minutes brought us to the cool shade of an interior corridor, where, being delivered over to one of the wardens, the mechanic of this vast establishment lay before us. Let me tell the reader something of the origin and uses of the prison.

Pentonville prison, which has been erected within the last four years at an expense of £85,000 to government, is designed as a great school of discipline for convicts, preparatory to their transportation to Van Diemen's Land. Instead of despatching convicts, as formerly, fresh from their trial, and consequently without any improvement in their feelings and habits, it is proposed they shall in future go through a period of instruction and probation at Pentonville previous to their departure. Convicts between the ages of 18 and 35, and under sentence of transportation for periods not exceeding 15 years, are considered suitable inmates. The period of probation is limited to 18 months. Like the prison at Parkhurst, in the Isle of Wight, for juvenile offenders, this at Pentonville for adults must be viewed as an academy of purification, not as a jail of oppressive or vengeful punishment. The convict, on entering the establishment, is told to bid adieu to his accustomed scenes and practices, and is made to feel that he is entering on an entirely new career; he is informed that he will be afforded ample opportunity of learning an art which will enable him to earn his bread by honourable industry; that moral and religious knowledge will be imparted to him as a guide for his future life; that at the end of eighteen months, when a just estimate can be formed of the effect produced by the discipline on his character, he will be sent to Van Diemen's Land, there, if he behave well, at once to receive a ticket of leave, which is equivalent to freedom, with the certainty of abundant maintenance, the fruit of industry; that if he behave indifferently, he will be transported to Van Diemen's Land, there to receive a probationary pass, which will secure to him only a limited portion of his own earnings, and which will impose galling restraints on his personal liberty; and that if he behave ill, he will be transported to Tasman's Peninsula, there to work in a probationary gang, without wages, deprived of liberty, and an abject slave. Such is the view presented to the prisoner on the day when he enters Pentonville, and which is never lost sight of until he leaves the prison for embarkation; when, according to the register kept of his conduct, the governors will determine in which of the three classes he shall be placed.

At the time of my visit, the prison contained about 500 inmates, all in a course of active treatment. It is a rule of the house that there shall be perfect silence; and, accordingly, nothing is heard but the tread of the wardens, or the click of their keys opening or locking the doors of the cells. The organisation of the cells is full of ingenious contrivances. Issuing from the outer passage, you enter the central hall, which consists of four arcades, radiating from a point like a fan, and open from the floor to the roof of the building, but covered in with ceiling and skylights. The cells are entered from the sides of the arcades, and there are three storeys of them, one row above another. The lower row of cells is entered from the floor, but those above are reached by galleries, going along the walls at the proper heights; and by narrow cork-screw stairs of open ironwork at the centering part of the arcades, these galleries can be very conveniently attained. The arcades are lettered A, B, C, and D; and the rows or storeys are marked 1, 2, and 3. As the cells are also numbered, any one can be easily distinguished—as, for instance, Arcade B, Row 2, No. 17, would at once indicate which was meant. On the gray jackets and trousers of the prisoners, similar markings in red cloth are inscribed. Separation, as well as silence, is enforced. Each prisoner has a cell

\* Foreign Library, Part 9.



to himself, in which he works, eats, and sleeps. At certain hours, however, detachments are allowed to march out to court-yards for open-air exercise. In marching, each prisoner must be four yards from another; no one must speak a single word to any companion; and every one, on getting out, is locked into his own separate court-yard. These court-yards are triangular spaces, surrounding a central station-house, in which is a warden, who commands a view of the whole. There can be not only no intercourse by words or signs between the prisoners, but no personal knowledge of each other. By an arrangement which at first sight has something unpleasant in it, but is in reality humane as well as judicious, all are provided with caps, with a flap to fold down in front of the face, as far as the mouth, and furnished with holes for vision opposite the eyes. The flap being folded down by the prisoner when his cell is opened to visitors, or when he is marched to the exercising yard, his features are so completely sheltered from observation, that he is spared the pain of exposure either to strangers, or to his past and present companions.

Let us now look through a few of the cells of the prison. The first we visited is like all the rest, a neat white-washed apartment, thirteen feet long, seven feet broad, and nine feet high, with a window in the end wall for admitting light. In the corner on our right as we enter, is a shelf on which the rolled-up hammock or bed is placed during the day, and beneath it is a drawer in which any small articles may be deposited. Near these conveniences is a table, on which are observed a bible and one or two other books. Over the table, and projecting from the wall, is a gas burner shaded, which is lighted at night for the use of the inmate. A short way farther in the cell is the neatest washing apparatus I have ever yet seen. A metal basin is fixed to the wall with a pipe of water over it, which can be turned on at pleasure, for washing the face and hands; the waste water escapes from the bottom of the basin, and flows by a tube into a stone seat-pan or jar, provided with a cast-iron lid, moveable on a hinge. I believe each prisoner may use six gallons of water daily in his cell, independently of the quantity consumed in baths, to which he is subjected at regular intervals, in an appropriate part of the house. Before leaving the cell, the visitor is shown hooks in the walls to which the hammock is slung at night, and also the means for supplying warm air, and for ventilation. The heated air from stoves in the lower storey is admitted through perforated plates in the floor, and the vitiated atmosphere is withdrawn through perforations above the door, which communicate with furnaces in a distant part of the building. This method of ventilation seems effectually to remove all impurities in the air; and it may be said with perfect safety, that the convicts of Pentonville prison breathe a purer atmosphere than the denizens of the most elegant drawing-rooms in the metropolis.

On leaving the cell, the warden brings under our notice an ingenious contrivance by which the prisoner can at any time, during the day or night, call an attendant to supply his wants. Within the cell is a spring, which, on being touched, causes a bell in the arcade to sound, and at the same time a tablet, which is hinged to the wall, to start conspicuously out; and as a number marked on the tablet corresponds with that of the cell, the officer in attendance is led at once to the spot where his services are required. In the door is a small eye-hole, covered with gauze and a shield, and through this aperture the prisoner's actions can be at all times unobservedly watched. The door is likewise furnished with a small square wicket, by which meals may be readily conveyed to the inmate.

In the different cells which we either entered or had a peep of through the eyelet apertures, the inmates were busy at work; some were employed as shoemakers, others as tailors, several as blacksmiths and carpenters, and some as weavers and mat-makers. In the blacksmith's cells a forge with bellows and anvil is fitted up, suitable to the dimensions of the place, and it was interesting to observe the diligence with which they hammered their iron and performed other operations, as if apparently pleased with their labour and the relief it afforded to the irksomeness of their solitude. In this daily pursuit of some useful occupation may be perceived a most powerful agency in physical and moral culture, and the very want of which has doubtless been the main cause of the crimes for which the prisoners have been brought to their present unhappy condition. In a few of the cells I observed two individuals—a prisoner and his instructor. This brings me to observe, that the public do not seem well informed as to the exact meaning of what constitutes the system of silence and separation to which the prisoners in this establishment are subjected. Already, I have shown how the various wants of the prisoners at Pentonville are humanely attended to. In addition to this attention, they are waited on in their respective cells by persons to instruct them in the professions they adopt, and by medical, clerical, and other functionaries. Numbers of them attend school together at appointed times; and here, though they cannot see each other, they are all seen by the schoolmaster, and hear each other read. The whole, likewise, unite in religious exercises in a chapel, to which we shall now adjourn, conducted by another warden, who, like all his fellow

functionaries, wears a tightly-fitting blue uniform, with a small polished leathern box at his girdle for holding his keys—we ascend by one of the spiral staircases to an upper part of the building. The chapel we found to be a spacious apartment, fitted up with an organ, a plain reading desk and pulpit, and other necessary furniture. The benches, which are disposed in a slope upwards from the floor, are divided into single box-like seats, entering from behind, and therefore while the officiating clergyman has the whole congregation before him, no one member can see another. At the time of our visit, a class of prisoners was receiving instruction from the schoolmaster of the establishment. Ascending to the roof above the chapel, a panoramic view was presented of the whole prison and its court-yards, covering a space of nearly seven acres, the whole, excepting the front edifice, surrounded by a high wall, in the angles of which are placed the houses of the resident officers. Immediately adjoining, on the north, is the Caledonian asylum, an institution for boarding and educating the orphan children of Scottish parents, and the inmates of which, dressed in red tartan kilts, are observed scampering sportively round their spacious playground. Looking southwards and westwards, the extensive forest of houses and spires, under a canopy of smoke, points out the great metropolis, whose lines of brick streets are seen rapidly stealing upon this distant spot, laying waste green fields, cottages, and gardens, in their remorseless progress.

Descending from this lofty situation, we were next conducted to the basement storey of the building, in which the culinary processes are conducted. Large stoves, ovens, and boilers, as may be supposed, form the principal apparatus in this quarter; there is, besides, every convenience for serving up the food of the prisoners, including a windlass and lift, by which the trays of rations are raised to the required height in the arcades above. After being lifted, the trays are run along in carriages to any required point in the respective galleries; and with equal rapidity and ease they are brought back and lowered to the regions underneath. In the course of examining these details, it occurred to me to take a note of the dietary of the prisoners, which is as follows:—For breakfast, each prisoner is served with three quarters of a pint of cocoa and six ounces of bread; for dinner, he has four ounces of meat, without bone, and weighed after cooking, half a pint of soup, half a pound of potatoes, and five ounces of bread; and for supper, he has a pint of gruel (a kind of thin oatmeal porridge), and five ounces of bread. This diet, I was informed, is never changed, except in the kind of animal food; a degree of variation which seems to me decidedly too little. Nothing is now more clearly ascertained than the benefit arising from a judicious ascertainment of food, particularly to those whose lives are otherwise monotonous. A sacrifice of both quantity and quality might well be incurred for the sake of variation. Having already had occasion to deliver our sentiments on this subject,\* we shall not further insist upon the point, but proceed to remark that the diet of Pentonville must appear both abundant and good—only, indeed, too much so, when we consider that the inmates are professionally undergoing a penal kind of life. I can say, with perfect confidence, that no free rural labourer in Scotland is able to supply himself and family with food equal in value to what is given to these convicted criminals. Butcher meat and wheat bread seven times a-week, is not indeed procurable by any peasantry in Europe; and it might be easily proved, that a Pentonville prisoner consumes more of both meat and bread in one week, than enters the mouth of an Irish cottier in twelve months, or perhaps a lifetime. Any fault-finding on this score, however, is not my purpose. The governors of such institutions are hardly able to follow their own judgment with respect to diet. Under a storm of clamour from a class who, with no real philanthropy in their hearts, find the pretence to an ultra share of it a useful engine, they are tempted to err on what is called the safe side, and administer quantities and kinds of food much beyond what is reasonable and proper in the circumstances.

An important part of the moral enginery of the prison is a library, furnished on a scale of liberality which the visitor could not possibly have anticipated. Besides books of a moral and religious character, it contains many which are simply instructive and entertaining, with various periodicals, the whole being given out to the prisoners, under particular regulations, with, I understand, the best effect. It is easy to conceive how the company of an amusing book or periodical must soften the pangs of solitude, and lead to new and better trains of thought. Ever blessed be that art which can thus transform a cheerless dungeon into a closet of tranquil and hopeful meditation!

With respect to a realisation of the objects for which the prison was erected, a sufficient length of time has not elapsed to entitle us to speak with any degree of certainty. As yet, the plan of discipline, which, as will have been perceived, is a modification of the silent and separate system, is only experimental. My own impression is, that however humane in design, it embraces too slight a consideration of the previous habits and mental condition of the prisoners, many of whom, with all the aids afforded them, must

necessarily pine in their involuntary solitude, and long for out-of-door occupation and the exchange of sentiment with their fellows. As the confinement is to be in no case for a longer period than eighteen months, perhaps no really bad effects may ensue either on the bodily or mental health of the inmates; yet it is tolerably evident that every anticipated benefit might have been realised with better advantage, had the course of discipline been somewhat more indulgent. Out-of-door labour, on a varied scale, a thing so exceedingly desirable, has been altogether prevented by the situation of the prison, which, though salubrious and convenient, is defective from the want of extensive grounds on which the prisoners could have been employed either in gardening or agriculture—pursuits adapted, in an eminent degree, to their future life in the colonies, and calculated alike to enliven the mind and strengthen the physical system. In the present probationary state of the prison, I am disinclined to say anything more in disparagement of the system adopted. We may be assured that the commissioners appointed by the crown to inspect and regulate the prison—among whom are Lord Wharnccliffe, the Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Devon, Earl of Chichester, Lord John Russell, the speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Benjamin Brodie, and Dr Ferguson—will watch the progress of this great moral experiment, and readily concur in any plan for its safe melioration. In a report of the commissioners lately laid before parliament, they express themselves highly satisfied with the condition of the prison, the conduct of the subordinate officers, and the behaviour and general health of the convicts. "The prisoners," they observe, "have conducted themselves with the greatest propriety, and evince the most cheerful and ready disposition to conform to the rules of the prison, and to avail themselves of the opportunities which are afforded for their moral and general improvement. The effects of this disposition are already strikingly apparent. Their state of health is in all respects most satisfactory; and they have generally made a considerable progress in the trades in which they have been instructed."

And here my thread is spun. I have described what I saw at the prison at Pentonville; and trusting that it has not tired the patience of the ever-indulgent reader, I bid him, along with the polite warden, good-bye, and, with a brilliant sun gleaming overhead, trudge back the dusty gritty pathway to the city.

#### DAYS AND NIGHTS OF SALMON-FISHING.

MR SCROPE is, we presume, a man of fortune devoted to hunting and fishing. He formerly gave to the public a pleasant, gossiping, anecdotal book on deer-stalking, as practised in the Highlands, and now he presents a similar work on salmon-fishing in the Lowlands.\* Born beside the Tweed ourselves, amidst fish and fishing-rods and tackle, and reared under a burgh coat-of-arms containing *vert* three salmon, one going up and two down—significant hint at the natural history of the animal—we hail this volume with much gusto, only sighing to think that fate has severed us so effectually from the scenes it describes, and that probably we must, in the words of the old song, "lay our banes far from the Tweed." Say as they will that fishing is an inhumane sport, there is that about it which the most benevolent natures are unable to resist. Walton, Davy, Sir Charles Bell, hundreds of other most amiable men, saw nothing to shock them in it. Dr Gillespie, professor of *humanity* at St Andrews, is here quoted as clearly of opinion that the fish feel scarcely any pain from the hook. Mr Scrope himself puts the case candidly thus: "I take a little wool and feather, and tying it in a particular manner upon a hook, make an imitation of a fly; then I throw it across the river, and let it sweep round the stream with a lively motion. This I have an undoubted right to do, for the river belongs to me and my friend; but mark what follows. Up starts a monstrous fish with his murderous jaws, and makes a dash at my little Andromeda. Thus he is the aggressor, not I; his intention is evidently to commit murder. He is caught in the act of putting that intention into execution. Having wantonly intruded himself on my hook, which I contend he had no right to do, he darts about in various directions, evidently surprised to find that the fly, which he hoped to make an easy conquest of, is much stronger than himself. I naturally attempt to regain this fly, unjustly withheld from me. The fish gets tired and weak in his lawless endeavours to deprive me of it. I take advantage of his weakness, I own, and drag him somewhat loath to the shore, where one rap at the back of the head ends him in an instant. If he is a trout, I find his stomach distended with flies. \* \* You see, then, what a wretch a fish is; no ogre is more blood-thirsty." Here we clearly have both the practice and the moral philosophy of angling in a few sentences. This settles the case as to the fish. As to the man, it is not less lucid. Allow that angling does not "pay," that it uses time which could be spent to the benefit of one's patrimonial interest, still it is a useful and profitable way of spending time, when not pursued more exclusively than a regard for common prudence will allow. Somehow it does not do to be always busy—always wise. It has a bad effect on the character, making us rigid and unaccommodating.

\* See two articles entitled *Inquiries respecting Food*, in Nos. 390 and 398 of the Journal.



It is necessary to have a taste for some innocent sort of absurdity, which will take us away from solemn worldly matters, and make us boys and girls again, if we have it in our heart to be so. We then come to look more graciously on both men and things; while men, again, like us for having a little folly as well as themselves. Then the relaxation conduces to health. Altogether, the thing has a good effect—there cannot be a doubt of it.

The only fault of Mr Scrope's book is, that, being published at some forty shillings (which, however, its typography and embellishments justify), it is not likely to be so extensively useful as we could wish. We do not think of the many it might instruct in salmon-fishing, but the many more whom it might animate and soften by its cheerful natural descriptions and stories, and the glimpses of Scottish rural character which it adds to the labours of Scott, Galt, and Miss Ferrier. Having spent about twenty years on the banks of the southern waters, he knows every pool and wheel and rapid amongst them, and seems to have at length all but identified himself with the simple people residing on their banks, so that he reports the Doric conversations of Tom Purdie and Rob Kerse with nearly as much fidelity as a native author. After a chapter on the natural history of the salmon—recently much cleared up by carefully-conducted investigations—he proceeds to discourse on the various maxims of his art, breaking off every now and then the comparatively dry thread of instruction, to introduce a characteristic story or scene which it suggests to him. Instruction, it must be owned, seems pretty much a hopeless affair, for such is the caprice of the fish, that often the best rules are set at naught. "Sometimes," says Robin Hope, "they will tak wi' the thoom o' your mitten, if ye would throw it in, and at others, they wadna look at the Lady o' Makerston and a' her braws!" [that is, a particular artificial fly so called.] The state of the weather is another perplexity defying all calculation. "Ye needna fash yoursel the day wi' your lang wand," said a rustic to Mr Scrope, adjusting his tackle by Tweedside; "I wadna gie a pinch o' snuff for a' ye'll get there; there are ower money poutered lawyers about." Our author's surprise terminated in his discovering that poutered lawyers are white puffy clouds, indicating a state of the atmosphere unfavourable to fishing. Even the fullness or emptiness of the stream tells on the sport. It is during the subsidence of a flood that the fish take best; and now, unfortunately, in consequence of draining, floods subside much too quickly. One way and another, there are many impediments to fishing, and yet, perhaps, this only renders it the dearer to the true votary.

Personal qualities also come in for a large share of what leads to success. "A salmon-fisher should be strong in the arms, or he will never be able to keep thrashing on for ten or twelve hours together with a rod eighteen or twenty feet long, with ever and anon a lusty salmon at the end of his line, pulling like a wild horse with the lasso about him. Now, he is obliged to keep his arms aloft, that the line may clear the rocks; now, he must rush into the river, then back out with nimble pattern, always keeping a steady and proper strain of line; and he must preserve his self-possession 'even in the very tempest and whirlwind of the sport,' when the salmon rushes like a rocket. It is indispensable to have a quick eye and ready hand: your fly, in its exact position, should never be lost sight of; and you should imagine every moment of the live-long day that an extraordinary large salmon is coming at it." No one, we suspect, but a fisher can have an adequate idea of the enthusiasm required for all this—such absorption of mind as the following anecdote implies: A young friend of Mr Scrope had been repeatedly disappointed one day by a particular fish in the Mertoun water, Berwickshire, and at eve went home, casting many a longing lingering look behind. "That night, the hostel being full, we slept in a double-bedded room. At the dead hour of twelve, I was awakened by loud cries of 'I have him, I have him!' 'Hold him fast, then,' said I, for I thought he had collared a thief; but in truth he had not: he had only got hold of the bell-rope, and was fishing away with it in his dreams, with a salmon, of course, at the end of it. Luckily, he did not arouse the Maritornes of the inn: no bell having ever been attached to the pull, which was a mere matter of ornament."

Probably the whole sport is too much of an adventure for most stomachs. Judge from the following specimen of what is called a *run* with a fish:—"Every one knows that the Kingswell Lees [a particular part of the Pavilion-water, a tributary of the Tweed near Melrose,] in fisherman's phrase, fishes off land; so there I stood amongst the rocks that dip down to the water's edge. Having executed one or two throws, there comes me a voracious fish, and makes a startling dash at 'Meg with the muckle mouth' [a peculiarly dressed hook.] Sharply did I strike the catfish; whereas he rolled round disdainful, making a whirl in the water of prodigious circumference: it was not exactly Charybdis, or the Maelstrom, but rather more like the wave occasioned by the sudden turning of a man-of-war's boat. Being hooked, and having by this turn set his nose peremptorily down the stream, he flashed and whizzed away like a rocket. My situation partook of the nature of a surprise. Being on a rocky shore, and having a bad start, I lost ground at first considerably; but the reel sang out joyously, and yielded a liberal length of line, that saved me from the

disgrace of being broke. I got on the best pace I was able, and was on good ground just as my line was nearly all run out. As the powerful animal darted through Meg's Hole, I was just able to step back and wind up a few yards of line; but he still went a killing pace; and when he came near Melrose Bridge, he evinced a distressing preference for passing through the farther arch, in which case my line would have been cut by the pier. My heart sunk with apprehension, for he was near the opposite bank. Purdie seeing this, with great presence of mind took up some stones from the channel, and threw them one by one between the fish and the said opposite bank. This naturally brought Master Salmo somewhat nearer; but still for a few moments we had a doubtful struggle for it. At length, by lowering the head of the rod, and thus not having so much of the ponderous weight of the fish to encounter, I towed him a little sideways; and so advancing towards me with propitious fin, he shot through the arch nearest me.

Deeply immersed, I dashed after him as best I might; and arriving on the other side of the bridge, I floundered out upon dry land, and continued the chase. The salmon, 'right orgillous and presumptive,' still kept the strength of the stream, and, abating nothing of his vigour, went swiftly down the Whirls; then through the Boat-shiel, and over the shallows, till he came to the throat of the Elm-wheel, down which he darted again. Owing to the bad ground, the pace here became exceedingly distressing. I contrived, however, to keep company with my fish, still doubtful of the result, till I came to the bottom of the long cast in question, when he still showed fight, and sought the shallows below. Unhappily, the alders prevented my following by land, and I was compelled to take water again, which slackened my speed. But the stream soon expanding, and the current diminishing, my fish likewise travelled more slowly; so I gave a few sobs, and recovered my wind a little, gathered up my line, and tried to bring him to terms. But he derided my efforts, and dashed off for another burst, triumphant. Not far below lay the rapids of the Saughterford: he would soon gain them at the pace he was going, that was certain—see, he is there already! But I back out again on dry land, nothing loath, and have a fair race with him. Sore work it is. I am a pretty fair runner, as has often been testified; but his velocity is surprising. On, on—still on he goes, plunging up the water like a steamer. 'Away with you, Charlie! Quick, quick, man—quick for your life! Loosen the boat at the Cauld Pool, where we shall soon be.' And so indeed we were, when I jumped into the said craft, still having good hold of my fish.

The Tweed is here broad and deep, and the salmon at length had become somewhat exhausted; he still kept in the strength of the stream, however, with his nose seawards, and hung heavily. At last he comes near the surface of the water. See how he shakes his tail and dips downwards, seeking the deep profound—that he will never gain! His motions become more short and feeble; he is evidently doomed, and his race well nigh finished. Drawn into the bare water, and not approving of the extended elik [a landing-hook], he makes another swift rush, and repeats this effort each time that he is towed to the shallows. At length he is eliked in earnest, and hauled to shore: he proves one of the grey scull, newly run, and weighs somewhat above twenty pounds. The hook is not in his mouth, but in the outside of it; in which case, a fish being able to respire freely, always shows extraordinary vigour, and generally sets his head down the stream." [The run was nearly two miles.]

But Mr Scrope's title also includes nights of salmon-fishing. Is he, then, so much of an enthusiast as to angle by night as well as by day? Not exactly that; but there is night-fishing on the Tweed, though not night-angling. It is an old popular custom on that river to have a night occasionally of what they call "burning the water;" that is, a light is fixed on a stick, and paraded along the banks, or in a coble [a small flat-bottomed boat]—the fish are attracted to it—and the men then spear them with trident-like instruments called *leisters*.

"A three-tad leister over his shoulter,  
Clear dangling hang."

says Burns in his description of Death. A night of water-burning is described with vast animation by Mr Scrope, or, as he chooses to call himself in his pages, Harry Otter. Be it noted, the scene is within a mile or two of Abbotsford, and one of the dramatic persons is Tom Purdie, Scott's well-known forester and man of all work. About eight o'clock, in a fine quiet evening, the party met at the Brig-end Pool. All being ready, "a light was struck; and the spark being applied to rags steeped in pitch, and to fragments of tar-barrels, they blazed up at once amid the gloom, like the sudden flash from the crater of a volcano." The principals now sprang into the boats. Harry Otter stood at the head, and Charlie Purdie at the stern. These men regulated the course of the craft with their leisters; the auxiliaries were stationed between them, and the lights was in the centre by the boat side. The logs, steeped as they were in pitch, crackled and burned fiercely, sending up a column of black smoke. As the rude forms of the men rose up in their dark attire, wielding their long leisters, with the streaks of light that glared partially upon them, and surrounded as they were by the shades of night, you might almost have fancied yourself in the realms

below, with Pluto and his grim associates, embarked on the Stygian lake. But as the sports began, and as the Scotch accent prevailed, the illusion passed away; for no poet that I am aware of has made the above swarthy and mysterious personages express themselves in the language of Tweedside; nor could one fancy salmon in the Styx, though they might well disport in the streams of the happy fields beyond.

'Now, my lads,' says the master, 'take your places. Tom, stand you next to me; Sandy, go on the other side of Tom; and do you, Jamie, keep in the middle, and take tent to cap the boats well over the rapids. Rob, do you and Tom Purdie keep good lights and fell the fish. Halloo, Tom, you have smugged a leister into the boat for your own use.'

'Ay, ay, that have I, joust for my ain diversion, ye ken.'

'Well, well, you may just keep it, for you are a stout chiel, and it would be hard work to get it from you; besides, no one can use it more dexterously than yourself. Now, then, we will push the boat up the cheek of the stream till we come to the head of it. That will do. Now, shoot her across the gorge, and down she goes merrily, broadside foremost, according to rule. Cap, Charlie, cap, man; we are drifting down like mad; keep back your end of the boat.'

'Aweel, aweel, she gangs cannily now; look, uncle, a muckle fish before ye; or ever ye kent, the maister's leister gaed through him, and played auld dife. That side, that side, Jamie; he's rinnin' up to get past. Od, ye have him; and I hae anither, and anither. Keep a gude light, Tom. Now, let us tak up the boat to the head of the stream, or ever we look the stanes, for there war a muckle fish ganged by that none o' ye gomrells ever saw. There, we are high enouch now; hand yer hand and let her fa' doon again: hey, but I see him the noo afore me; ou, what an awfu' beast!'

So saying, Charlie drove his leister furiously at him; but whether one of the prongs struck against the edge of the rock above him, which prevented its descent to the bottom, or from whatever other cause, the stroke was unsuccessful, and as he lifted the barren weapon out of the water, there arose a merry shout and guffaw from the spectators on the shore.

'Cap! cap!' cried Charlie; 'now, haud yer hand; gie me up the boat; od, but I'll hae him yet; he's gone amangst thae hiding stanes.'

Whereupon Charlie brought the head of the boat to the stream, pushed her higher up, and pulled her ashore; he then landed, and seizing a brand out of the fire, put it into Jamieson's hand, who preceded his eager steps like a male Thais, or one of the Eumenides in pantaloons. He now stood upon a rock which hung over the river, and from that eminence, and with the assistance of the firebrand, examined the bottom of it carefully. His body was bent over the water, and his ready leister held almost vertically; as the light glared on his face, you might see the keen glistening of his eye. In an instant he raised up his leister, and down he sprang from the rock right into the river, and with that wild bound nailed the salmon to the channel. There was a struggle with his arms for a few seconds; he then passed his hands down the pole of the weapon a little way, brought himself vertically over the fish, and lifted him aloft, cheered by shouts of applause from his friends on the shore.

Two or three more fish were taken amongst the stones at the tail of the cast, and the sport in the Carry-wheel being now ended, the fish were stowed in the hold of the boat, the crew jumped ashore, and a right hearty appeal was made to the whisky bottle.

All hands to the boat again. Come, Rob, give us a merry blaze; never spare the tar barrel: well done, Vulcan! Now we have a splendid light on the water, and can see well enough to read small print at the bottom of it.'

'Sandy Trummel, ye great bear, what gars ye stamp and scream at that rate!'

Sandy in fact not only stamped and screamed, but swore that he was dreadfully burnt with the pieces of charcoal and drops of flaming pitch which insinuated themselves between his shirt and cape of his jacket behind; whereas Tom Purdie, who was a considerate and humane man, took up the scowp which was used for lading out the boat, and filling that capacious utensil with water to the extent of its capacity, came behind the aggrieved, and emptied the whole contents down his back. 'And now, Sandy, mon,' says he, 'I hae made ye quite comfortable, and ye owe me a gude turn.' But, who would have thought it! The blood of the Trummels was up; and, seizing a firebrand in a style that did little honour to his gratitude, the diluted one rushed forward intent on vengeance. Grim looked Tom Purdie, and charging with his leister, he held the foeman at bay. Who can say what Homeric deeds might not have been done, had not Charlie, first whispering to the master to stand fast, given the boat a sudden whirl round with the stroke of an oar, which laid Tom Purdie flat upon his back at the bottom of the boat, and canted Sandy Trummel fairly overboard! He fell in rather a picturesque attitude, for which I cannot in candour give him much credit, as the affair seemed to be quite involuntary, and too sudden for him to study effort. His right hand held the torch aloft for a moment, Marmion fashion, which soon fell and hissed in the current with a train of smoke which trailed along the surface of the water. Sandy's feet were actively employed in kicking his best, by which means he agitated



the water in such a manner that, with the assistance of the light, it made a very brilliant and imposing appearance. The stream here being very shallow, he soon began to emerge, and about two thirds of his fair proportions rose up from the channel; his mouth seemed full of water and abuse; he soon got rid of the one; but before he could vent the other, he was anticipated by the boat's crew, who all shouted out shame upon him for his awkwardness, and for having nearly upset the boat in his fall, and endangered the lives of several worthy individuals. Thus a sort of balance was struck between faults on both sides, and Tom Purdie himself assisted him to regain the boat; 'and Sandy, mon,' said he, as he lifted him in, 'I shall be always willing to do ye the same good service when ye need it; so ye'll let me ken when the burning pick gets aboard ye again.'

They now passed over some bare streams where no salmon would lie; the navigation amongst the rocks was somewhat intricate, there being barely room for the width of the boat in some of the rapids; but Charles Purdie hit the thing off to a nicety. They then burned the *Glass-wheel Pot*, the *Oak Tree*, and the *Noirs*, in all of which they got a few fish.

'Rob,' said Charlie, 'wait one o' yer sticks that they may be weel kinelt afore we get into Brig-end Pule; now, lads, ye mun cap well here, for aye will gang ower the stream wi' a terrible fleec; od, I see them glancing down the pule as thick as herrin; Sandy, mon, but ye're dancing again; what's come ower ye! ye'll be wanting Tom Purdie's big ladle again, I'm thinkin'.'

'The deil may hae Tam Purdie and his muckle ladle; for as he knockit off a bit fish in the boat, he dung yun o' the tae o' the waster intil ma leg; he is aye sae camsterie.'

'Ye canna blame me, Sandy, for the mischanter, for ye are aye stammering among the fish like a haveril as ye are, and half fun into the bargain. Halloo, Sandy, ye'll no crack o' yer deeds the nicht, for yer waster's aye clanking against the stanes, whilst the maister is striking the fish afore ye by dizens; and see, muckle Tam has lifted in yun amaisht as lang as himsel'.'

'Come, come, lads,' says the master, 'hold yer elish-ma-clavers, for we are just going into Brig-end Pool; so keep back the boat as well as ye can, or we shall go fiery fast ower the stream.'

'Hout, tout, he mun let her gang; there is plenty of water to take her ower.'

Charlie Purdie was never more mistaken in his life; the stream drove us downward at a rapid race, notwithstanding we in some measure moderated it by capping our best with the leisters. Bang went the boat's broadside right against the rock, to which she stuck fast till the stream above poured into her in the most effective possible style, and down she went of course. The water, however, was by no means deep; but those fish which we had taken since the load went home, found their way again into the river, and began to vanish down the stream. Being deprived of life, they went passively along, followed by all the boat's crew, who rushed about and charged with their leisters, 'hurry, hurry, splash, splash,' till they fished out most of them, the remainder being left to solace the eels. This, in common parlance, would be called a disaster; a sort of shipwreck in miniature; but judging from the merriment it excited, it might be deemed the best sport of the night. \* \* \*

The boat is hauled ashore and emptied. 'Most of the dead salmon having been at length forked out of the river, we all got aloft again, and passed down those rapids above Melrose Bridge called the Quarry Stream, Back Brae, and Kingswell Lees, snatching out a fish occasionally in our course; then the flame soon gleamed upon the bridge, struck upwards on the roof of the vast arch as we shot through it, and revealed the dark pines below, which shelved down to the margin of the river.'

We were now in a salmon cast called the Whirls, which runs deep and solemn, and we had scarcely set our leisters in the rest, ere we found that a fisherman had been to work before us, and an excellent hand he was at the sport; he had neither light nor boat, and, being tolerably hungry, I suppose, was devouring a twelve-pounder, all raw as it was, in the dry channel of the river.

'See! the otter, the otter! he has got into the water. Bring round the boat—quick, quick! Now, keep her on the edge of the deep current, and we shall leister him to a certainty.' No such thing. He had not yet made up his mind to be leistered; and, being of a solitary disposition, rather shunned our society than otherwise; so, instead of attempting to gain the main stream, he went insidiously down the shallows, where no boat could swim. He was thus out of the reach of being speared in the usual manner; but Charlie Purdie had a go at him by flinging his leister from a distance. It was a complete failure. Charlie followed up the thing, however, by leaping out of the boat; nothing could be fairer or more honourable, as he thus gave the amphibious animal the advantage of element. The men were all eager and in commotion; so what with boat and lights, to say nothing of the dreadful tridents, the beast was fairly confused, and almost surrounded. Purdie, who had sent away his leister upon a vain errand, albeit unarmed, continued the chase on foot, and at length gripped the brute by the tail; there was pulling and splashing, till at last he held the otter up aloft triumphantly. Now, as this

position, though not precisely vertical, did not happen to suit the brute's convenience, the subtle animal managed to twist round, and to fix his teeth on the captor's arm. This was rather disagreeable to Charlie, as the teeth of the otter abound in practical experiments. The posture of affairs then, you see, was as follows:—the tenacious Purdie had hold of the vermin with his dexter, and was loath to relinquish his grip; the foe, nothing behind in tenacity, fixed his teeth in Charlie's sinister with equal perseverance; thus both his arms were fully occupied. Nothing daunted, Charlie cried out with Spartan endurance, 'Hey, lad, but twae can play at that!' So, extending his jaws, he fixed his grinders in the animal's throat, and worried him exceedingly. In fine, after a very ludicrous struggle, he shook off my excellent namesake, and flung him on the shore, where he was despatched with the leisters before he could regain the river. Thus ended 'the battle of Otterbourne;' and thus ended, also, our sport for the night."

Having more than exhausted our space, we must take leave of Mr Serope, not, however, without most sincerely thanking him for this pleasant addition to the literature of innocent sports and recreations.

## JOTTINGS ON THE COLONIES.

### PORT NATAL.

At the end of a description of the Boors, or Dutch farmers of the Cape of Good Hope colony, inserted in No. 571 of the Journal, we stated that a number of them had endeavoured to establish themselves at Natal, as a colony independent of the British government. Their rebellion was, however, subdued, and a temporary arrangement entered into between them and the government of the Cape colony. From that period, the status of Natal as a colony has been under the consideration of the home government. Pending this decision, however, the new settlement has advanced in prosperity. Its natural and local resources were so highly prized, that several wealthy farmers emigrated from the limits of the Cape colony, and joined the subdued rebels, who had wisely turned their attention to peaceful arts, and to the improvement of their new locality. Towns, villages, and churches, have sprung up, and the temporary republic established for itself a local government based upon the representative principle. Moreover, a brisk and growing trade has commenced between Cape Town and Port Natal. It appeared as if the Dutch farmers wished to atone for their former error by energetic industry and wise conduct. The home government, seeing matters were in this state, have thought it their wisest course to adopt Natal into the list of our colonies. Their intentions regarding the settlement were announced in the Official Gazette of the Cape colony on the 5th of May last, in the following terms:—1. A full amnesty is granted to the emigrant Boors (with four exceptions) on their submission; 2. The settlement at Natal is adopted as a British colony; 3. A colonial government to be established at Natal, distinct from, if not independent of, the Cape colonial government; 4. A commissioner to be despatched from Cape Town to intimate her majesty's confirmation of the amnesty act, and to inquire into the number of farmers, and other occupiers of land at Natal, and the quantity of land they occupy; 5. The settlers are invited to make known their unreserved opinions and wishes, in respect to the judicial and other local institutions they would wish to have, and are assured that their contentment is the main desire of government; 6. Moneys arising from the sale of land, or quit rents, and all customs collected along the coast, are declared vested in her majesty, and are to be applied to the maintenance of the civil government of the district; 7. There is to be no slavery whatever; nor any political disqualification on account of difference of race; nor any aggression upon the natives; 8. For the present, there is to be no land for sale at Natal, and any speculative emigration to be discouraged.

The last clause must be regarded as a most judicious one, for emigration could scarcely be attended with success to the utter stranger, until the colony be completely and firmly organised, and things have assumed a settled state. The want of labourers is, however, very great, and the emigration of that class of persons would be attended with benefit to all parties. But we regret to hear that the Dutch farmers object to Englishmen. The revenues of the new colony will, it is expected, be sufficient to provide a fund for the free conveyance of labourers; and as nearly all the troubles of the Cape colony have arisen from the want of them, a copious immigration of farm-assistants will doubtless take place. In time, it is hoped, the Dutch farmers will get over their prejudice against British farm-servants.

Natal can only be regarded as an important addition to our colonies. The trade already existing between it and Cape Town, will doubtless soon extend to Mauritius, Ceylon, and the Australian group of colonies. Nor will the trade of the new port with Great Britain be wholly contemptible. Port Natal will also be an additional city of refuge for shipwrecked seamen on the eastern coast of Africa.

### NEW ZEALAND.

Little has been heard of New Zealand for a considerable time. Its progress has been somewhat im-

peded, we believe, by the misunderstanding between the New Zealand Company and colonists on the one hand, and the governor and home government on the other. It contains, nevertheless, four settlements—Wellington, Nelson, Auckland, and New Plymouth—with an aggregate British population of ten thousand, who, although we hear of no brilliant doings amongst them in the way of production or exportation, seem to have got over all the first difficulties of their situation. Very recently, a complete arrangement of all differences between the company and government has taken place; the former becomes possessed, without further challenge, of a million of acres; a popular governor is appointed; and the whole group of islands is opened for systematic colonisation. The company, we understand, contemplates making new and more vigorous efforts in promoting the flow of labour and capital to the colony; and already it has adopted the scheme of a fresh settlement, which is to be specially, though not exclusively, Scotch, and entitled New Edinburgh. It is proposed that this settlement shall consist of 125,000 acres, in lots which shall each consist of a quarter of an acre of town ground, ten acres of suburban, and fifty of rural. Of the purchase-money, £216,000, a fourth goes to the company as the price of the settlement, £30,000 for surveys, £81,000 for emigration, and £26,000 for roads and bridges. It has been considered desirable that the Scottish worship and modes of school instruction should be followed, and with this view £25,000 have been set apart for the support of a Presbyterian minister and a proper number of teachers. The class of persons in request for New Edinburgh are agriculturists of small capital. The *Colonial Gazette* says—"We expect a good deal from a Scotch colony. The success of the small colony which the late Mr Pringle, secretary to the Anti-Slavery Society, was the means of founding at the Cape, shows how much may be expected from such a settlement. The eleven or twelve families of the Glen Lynden settlers were as disadvantageously placed as can well be conceived. They had an inadequate supply of labour; they were isolated from the rest of the colony—placed in a remote district to which there were no roads. But they were from Ettrick; they combined the scientific skill of the Scotch farmer with the habits acquired by residence in a difficultly accessible and primitive district. They bore and overcame with greater ease the inconveniences of a frontier settlement than English colonists could have done; they laboured indefatigably; and the consequence was, that when the Albany settlers (near the coast, and in a more accessible district) became dependent on the charity of the mother country, the Glen Lynden settlers supported themselves. Scotch agriculturists are admirably qualified for colonial pioneers."

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The difficulties which beset South Australia two or three years ago, and produced everything but universal bankruptcy, are described as being now nearly past, and the colony is beginning again to prosper. The absence of production was the feature which struck us most unfavourably about this province in its earlier days; but a different state of things is now to be observed. The year 1839 was the first in which there was what might be called a crop. There were then 443 acres in cultivation, 120 of them being wheat. The contrast between this, and the 21,645 acres under crop last year, 15,281 of these being wheat, is sufficiently striking. The advance of each year upon another during the last three years has been just about threefold. There has actually been more grain produced in 1842 than was necessary for the inhabitants, about 17,000 in number; and accordingly South Australia is expected this year to be a corn-exporting country, and that to the extent of a hundred thousand bushels. The live-stock of the province has also advanced at a rapid rate during the last five years, namely, as follows:—28—108—200—242— and 360 thousands. There are now twenty thousand cattle in the colony. The country people are beginning to cultivate the vine and tobacco, and they expect very soon to rear a sufficiency of the latter plant for dressing their sheep. The application of the colonists to the only true and sure mode of enriching themselves and their adopted country, is indicated forcibly by a fact which the governor lately stated to his council, that there are above six hundred houses in Adelaide (a third of the whole number) deserted, and many of them falling into decay.

At the close of last year, the surplus labour of the colony had been completely absorbed, and apprehensions were entertained that there would be a deficiency of hands for the crop then coming to maturity and the drop of lambs of the present year. Under these circumstances, South Australia may, we suppose, be considered as once more an eligible choice for the labouring class of emigrants. How far it may be attractive for capitalised settlers, we have no means of saying with precision; but the following extracts from what has come to us as a genuine letter, show at least one picture of rural happiness in the South Australian plains. It may be premised that the writer is a Quaker, who has been settled on a small agricultural farm since 1839:—

"As we are so much above the inhabitants of the plain, we possess a cooler climate. The sky is generally cloudless, and the atmosphere as clear and bright as can be imagined, with a pleasant zephyr blowing after



about eight o'clock in the morning. It seems as though, without an occasional hot wind to brew up a storm, we should have almost no rain in summer, as the sky is usually so cloudless and serene, you can scarcely fancy it will ever again be obscured. From the third month to the tenth, rain has hitherto been abundant, and there is no want of water throughout the peninsula: in the bottoms of most of the valleys there are natural ponds, and water may be procured by digging a well almost anywhere. We have every reason to consider the climate one of the most healthy in the world. Our own family have enjoyed uninterrupted good health since we have been here. We have found almost all plants cultivated in England to succeed well here, and our own garden contains at least one or two of almost every sort of herb and vegetable, as well as fruit. The strawberry grows luxuriantly, but produces very little fruit. The raspberry promises much better. But our principal fruits are the peach, the grape, melon, plum, cherry, and apple. The peach and vine are most completely at home. We have a small vineyard containing about two hundred of the latter, and a considerable number of the former; these grow and thrive exceedingly. Of flowers we can boast of a large proportion of those cultivated in English gardens, except bulbous-rooted ones. We hope this year to possess a fine show of dahlias, one of my brothers having received a liberal supply of seed from the gardener at Ackworth. In short, of the capabilities of our soil we are quite satisfied. I think it might be eminently a land of corn, wine, and oil. The wheat of our last year's crop weighed from sixty-three to sixty-six lbs. per bushel, producing on the land earliest sown thirty-five bushels to the acre. We are located in a valley about four miles to the westward of Mount Barker, where we hold about two hundred acres of land, besides a run on the hills and in the little valleys on each side of us for our cattle, about eighty in number. We have this year about fifty acres of wheat, eight of oats, five of potatoes, &c., and are now breaking up forty acres of new land, ready for another year. The whole of our farm and dairy we have hitherto conducted with our own hands, with the exception of the thrashing and reaping; besides all the ploughing and clearing of timber, building a barn, &c., we have put up nearly four miles of fencing, and hope to have in a few weeks' time upwards of three hundred acres inclosed, including a large grass paddock of one hundred and sixty acres, about three miles from this farm. Oxen are almost universally used for draught, of which four are about equal to two horses. Their harness is of the most primitive kind—a yoke of wood lies across their necks, which is kept in its place by a bow of iron placed under the neck of each ox, and its ends go through two holes in the yoke, where it is kept by pins; in the middle of the yoke a ring is fixed, to which the plough-chain is attached: this completes their outfit. Our time is, therefore, fully occupied, and our manner of life a good deal as in a quiet farmhouse in England. We see but few strangers; at the same time we have a respectable neighbourhood, and a respectable number of neighbours. In an open country (that is, unenclosed) like this, a neighbour in the next valley, a mile distant, seems very close. We begin the day early, and end it early. We are altogether a united family, taking our meals at the same table, which we have done ever since we have been in the colony, and all employed in the same pursuits, and for the same object—the good of all. This I always looked to as the chief advantage to a family like ours in settling in a new country. In England, our only prospect was to be scattered in all directions, unable to assist each other or our parents."

#### THE FETE OF NANTERRE.

AN interesting ceremony takes place annually in some of the French towns and villages. Every year a young woman, who has rendered herself remarkable for general good conduct, is selected to be crowned with white roses, and to receive certain other rewards at the hands of the civic functionaries. The following account of such a ceremony is abridged from a French illustrated newspaper, called "*L'Illustration, Journal Universel*." The scene is Nanterre, which lies between Paris and St Germain:—

"Nanterre," commences the sprightly French reporter, "honours virtue—Nanterre crowns the fortunate candidate (called the *Rosière*) for the year of little grace and many sins, 1843. Till now, we believed that *Rosières* only existed in comic operas and in Monsieur Bouilly's tales; but Nanterre has had the honour of undecieving us."

The *Rosière* of this year is a young woman who appears to be a model of every virtue—Mademoiselle Giraud. She is only twenty-six, and supports, by her own labour, part of her family. Her conduct up to this day has been exempt from reproach; never was there brought against her the smallest title of slander. But, would you believe it? a formidable opposition was raised against the coronation of Mademoiselle Giraud. Monsieur, the curate of Nanterre, demanded the honours of the roseate crown for another candidate, whose great merit consisted, in his eyes, of having assiduously frequented the

church and the confessional. The mayor and the municipal council stated, however, that, though they admired the piety of the priest's candidate, they thought that she who laboured hard, like Mademoiselle Giraud, to support her infirm parents, was best deserving of the reward. There unhappily followed a schism between the temporal and spiritual powers of Nanterre, and the priest refused to favour the ceremony with his presence. Leaving him, therefore, we pass at once to the triumphal procession, which conducted Mademoiselle Giraud, the fortunate *Rosière*, to the Town Hall. The drums of the national guard struck up when it began to move, and the church bells would have rung merrily out, only the disaffection of the curate condemned them to silence. A double line of national guards occupied the space between Mademoiselle Giraud's house and the Town Hall, from the windows of which flags were suspended. It was a magnificent spectacle, tending to incite all mankind to virtue—had all mankind been able to witness it. Indeed, we propose that a congress from the world in general should meet at this time of year in the commune of Nanterre for that purpose.

The march was commenced by the *garde départementale* (police), followed by the band of the national guard, playing pleasing and lively airs. Next appeared the *Rosière*, between the mayor and his deputy. Behind walked the municipal council, dressed in white, with their most showy badges, followed by a guard of honour, composed of *Messieurs*, marching in front, and armed with long pikes, such as ornament the national colours. The *Messieurs* are the principal agriculturists of the commune, who form a defensive, and often an offensive body, to make up the insufficient superintendence of the rural police, in guarding the country and in protecting the harvests against theft. Upon the steps of this yeomanry it is usual for the *Rosière* of the preceding year to follow, wearing on her head the crown which will soon pass from her forehead to that of the new heroine. But this time the ex-*Rosière* had become a defaulter; since her coronation, she exchanged the state of single blessedness for the troubles of matrimony. The office of carrying the chaste emblem, therefore, was transferred to one of the village maidens, who bore it on a velvet cushion in her place. Next appeared the members of several religious orders; amongst others that of 'the Virgin,' distinguished by the scarf of blue ribbon worn by its sisterhood. Lastly, a number of women, the relations and friends of the *Rosière* in their holiday dresses, walking in two lines, presently in four, and finally pressing forward in a compact crowd to form the rear of the procession.

Arrived at the town-house, the principal actors in the ceremony ranged themselves in the great hall, where marriages ordinarily take place. The mayor sat between his colleagues and the municipal councillors; the *Rosière* stood in front of him; the Sisters of the Virgin were placed on the right and left; behind were the friends, relations, officers of the national guards, and other great people of the village. At the bottom of the hall, amid a tableau formed of tri-colour flags, appeared in large letters this appropriate inscription, 'TO VIRTUE.' After an impressive delay, and a silence which may almost be called religious, the mayor began to speak, and pronounced a pathetic discourse on the advantages of virtue; then, by way of peroration, he placed round the neck of the *Rosière* a collar of gold; handed her a pair of ear-rings, a magnificent brooch, divers other trinkets—the forms and uses of which we have forgotten—and a sum of three hundred francs (about £12); finally, he removed the crown of white roses from the cushion on which it was deposited, and placed it on the head of the damsel, saying (we write from stenographic notes), 'Mademoiselle Giraud, receive, as the reward of virtue, the civic crown which your fellow-citizens have awarded you!' At these words the music—concealed in a vestibule of the building—struck up a spirited melody; tears suffused the eyes of the spectators, and the procession recommenced its march in the same order as it arrived. After the *Rosière* had been conducted back to her home, a splendid banquet—in which she and her family took part, and which the authorities of the village also honoured with their presence—terminated the doings of the day."

#### COMETS.

[From the *Bombay Times*.]

THE sensation occasioned throughout the native community, and the alarm excited amongst a no inconsiderable number of the European population by the appearance of a comet so magnificent and so unlooked-for as the present one, are such, that we trust we shall not be considered to have undertaken a superfluous or uninteresting task in endeavouring to lay before our readers a short abstract of our knowledge as to the character of these celestial wanderers, which, if it do not diminish their wonder, may, at all events, assist in allaying their fears.

Though comets of smaller dimensions exist in such abundance, that scarcely a year elapses without one or more of them being discernible in the heavens, those of the largest size present an appearance so striking, and arrive at such distant and irregular intervals, that, exceeding as it did the powers of the earlier astronomers to prognosticate or account for their appearance, or explain the nature of their constitution, they invariably filled men with alarm during the earlier ages, or in untutored states of society. There are believed to be many thousands of them in existence; 400 or 500 have been examined and catalogued by astronomers, and a vast number have either eluded observation altogether, or have as yet to visit the earth for the first time. Multitudes of comets must have escaped observation by traversing that part of the sky which is above the horizon during the day-time. These could only become visible by the rare incident of an eclipse of the sun occurring when they were in the heavens. This is known to have happened two thousand years since, when a large comet

was observed near the sun during a period of nearly total eclipse.

The comet which all at once burst upon us with such suddenness and brilliancy on the 4th of March, must have been in the sky for weeks approaching the sun, probably in quite as formidable shape and size as that in which it is now retiring. It became visible only when it came to set after twilight.

Comets generally consist of a large misty mass of light called the head; this is brightest towards the centre, where it presents the appearance of a star. It is seldom, however, that any solid body can be detected; stars having in most instances been observed through the brightest portion of the head or nucleus of the comet. The tail of the comet, as it is called, though preceding it in its course as often as it follows it, consists in a large mass of white hazy light, which proceeds apparently from the head, generally in the form of two streams or currents, which occasionally unite, but more frequently keep apart from each other. In the present comet they issue as a single beam, and so continue till they divide into two, considerably on towards the end of the tail. This appendage invariably extends itself in a direction opposite to that in which the sun is situated. The comet of 371 before Christ is said to have had a tail of 60 degrees; the train of that of 1618 is said to have been 104 degrees in length; that of 1680, the most celebrated in modern times, extended over a space of 70 degrees. Comets are believed to consist entirely of thin masses of vapour, penetrated in every quarter by solar light, which they reflect, but yielding, in reality, none of their own. The densest portions of them are without solidity or form; the tail itself is in the last degree of attenuation. The greater part of them travel round the sun in elliptical orbits like the planets—orbital, however, of such vast elongation, as to extend to immeasurable distances in the fields of space. Others of them appear to take still more extensive ranges—visiting the solar system, and then flying off to other worlds, or losing themselves in the firmament. Sometimes they move with extreme slowness, at others with extraordinary velocity; while the two extremes are occasionally exhibited by the same comet in different portions of its career. The comet of 1472 traversed an apparent distance in the heavens of 120 degrees in a single day. The tails of comets always increase in size and brightness as they approach the sun; when they emerge from his beams, in which they have for a time been lost, they shine forth in their fullest splendour, acquiring their greatest length and definiteness. As they recede from this luminary, their motion diminishes, and their tails by degrees become invisible; the head itself at length disappears, and in the far greater number of cases is never seen more from the earth. The comet of Halley appeared in its greatest splendour in 1682, when it passed so near to the sun as to be only one-half of his diameter removed from him. It appears to visit the earth once in 75 or 76 years. It was observed in 1305, 1456, 1531, 1607, 1759, and 1835, on each occasion diminishing in brilliancy, so as to have been scarcely discernible in its last visit by the naked eye. The comet of Encke returns to our firmament at intervals of three and a-half years. It was visible in 1812, 1815, 1819, 1822, 1825, 1828, 1832, 1835, 1839, and 1842. It seems to be getting slower and slower in its motions, and less conspicuous in its appearance, and will probably fall ultimately into the sun, or become entirely dissipated. The comet of Beila, the same as that of 1789 and 1793, is visible once in six and three-fourth years; it appeared, according to prediction, in 1832 and 1836, and will again return in 1844. In 1832, two predicted comets made their appearance; one of them actually crossed the path where our earth was a month afterwards. In 1770, the comet of Luxell got entangled amongst the satellites of Jupiter, and having been completely thrown out of its orbit by the attraction of the planet, was forced into a much larger ellipse. The motions of the satellites were not in the slightest degree disturbed by this extraordinary rencontre! The comet, until this accident befell it, had moved in an elliptical orbit, and returned towards the sun once every five and a-half years. Since then it has never been heard of, and is supposed to have been driven from our system altogether. Jupiter, in fact, seems to be a perfect stumblingblock in the path of comets, having repeatedly changed, as is now proved, orbits of long periods into those of short ones, and the converse—his own motions suffering not the slightest perturbation from the influence thus exercised on those of others. Amongst the majority of philosophers, comets begin to be considered as entirely gaseous. Their constitution is supposed to be so attenuated, that no perceptible effect would be produced by their coming in collision with any of the planets; it is highly probable that the earth may have many times passed through the tails of comets already; and were all the comets in existence to be absorbed in, or mixed up with, our atmosphere, it is considered doubtful whether mass enough of gaseous matter would be added permanently to elevate the mercury in the barometer. Their reputed effects on the climate, on temperature, or on animal life, are purely imaginary. As they visit us on an average oftener than once a-year, no event need occur during the season which may not be ascribed to the influence of the comet nearest at hand. Hot seasons have occasionally happened when comets of unusual magnitude were visible; the hottest known in the north of Europe have been without any such concomitant. It is difficult to perceive how a body, which might be absorbed into our atmosphere without producing any visible alteration on it, could affect its temperature, now that it is not less than a hundred millions of miles removed from us.

The space occupied by comets is vast beyond what we can imagine. The nuclei vary from 30 to 3000 miles in diameter; the tails range hundreds of millions of miles. The tail of the great comet of 1680 was ascertained by Newton to have been sixty millions of miles in length, and to have occupied no more than two days in emission from its body; it afterwards became the double of this, extending to a distance equal to the whole interval betwixt the sun and the earth. The tail of the comet

\* Translations of two or three of M. Bouilly's tales have been given in the Journal, under the titles, *The Man of the Shore*, *The Orphan Twins of Bourne*, &c.



of 1769 was fifty-four millions of miles in length; that of the comet of 1811 upwards of a hundred millions of miles; the portion of the head of this latter enveloped in its visible atmosphere was 540,000 miles in diameter, equal to nearly seven times that of the earth.

#### EVILS OF NATIONAL IGNORANCE.

[From *Porter's Progress of the Nation*.]

THIS United Kingdom, which boasts itself to be at the head of civilisation, has been among the last of European nations to make any public provision for the instruction of the people. This neglect is all the more extraordinary from the fact, that of all civilised countries, this is the one in which ignorance on the part of the people brings with it the greatest amount of danger. From their number, and the manner in which they are brought together in our large manufacturing and trading towns, the labouring classes have become a most important power for good or for evil, and exercise, without its being acknowledged, a very powerful influence over the deliberations of the senate and the acts of the government. Their situation is, besides, widely different from that of the labouring classes in every other country, where the great majority depend upon agricultural labour for their support, and are but little liable under any circumstances to be thrown out of employment. In England, on the contrary, the great and rapid increase in the population is all of it thrown, for the means of earning subsistence, upon pursuits other than agricultural. A change of fashion, or what is to the full as likely to occur where the legislature takes upon itself to interfere on all occasions by "protections" and restrictions with the course of industry—a change of policy, may in a moment, and without warning, throw tens of thousands out of employment, while, as we have lately witnessed, a succession of deficient harvests is sure to bring upon the whole class the severest privations. How necessary then it is that these masses, so greatly, so increasingly influential, should not be suffered to remain in ignorance of their true interests. They are not fools, that they cannot be led to see wherein those true interests lie, and to admit that they consist in upholding the laws and respecting the institutions of their country. Neither are they knaves, who, to secure a passing advantage, would wantonly invade the rights of their richer fellow-citizens. But they are ignorant; and in this condition all manner of fallacies may be made to pass with them for truth. To what but to ignorance are we to ascribe the hostility of our operative manufacturers to machinery, and their lawless crusades against it? How, unless means for teaching them are adopted, can they be expected to see the ultimate consequences to them of a machine the introduction of which into use has the present effect of throwing some among them out of their accustomed employment? The great bulk of the people, they whose sole dependence for their daily bread must be upon their daily toil, are most of all interested in the maintenance of order, under which alone they can have any assurance of demand for their labour. This truth, which they should be taught to recognise, does not lie upon the surface; and the unlearned may well be excused for not embracing it, when they see men who have had the advantages of instruction denied to themselves advocating doctrines irreconcilable with it. It is a fact, recognised by all who have investigated the subject, and demonstrable to all, that the introduction of machinery for simplifying manufacturing processes has had the effect not alone of increasing the comforts of the great body—the consumers—but also of multiplying manifold the demand for labour even in the particular branches to which the machinery is applied; and yet how common is it to hear men of educated minds, but who have not allowed themselves to consider this class of facts, inveighing against the introduction of a new machine as an interference with the rights of labour. From such a doctrine, as well as from others equally false and equally pernicious, there are no means of preserving the people but by educating them.

It is evident, that the kind of knowledge which will preserve from such fallacies will not be the result of instruction in the mere elements of learning; and this is rendered equally clear by the fact, that men whose education has been carried far beyond the elementary degree, have failed to acquire right views concerning points which the general safety requires should meet the practical assent of all; but this presents no difficulty. The educated man fails to recognise the truth because he is but partially educated, and has been left in ignorance with regard to that branch of knowledge which the working men, if educated at all, would be sure to make their own, since it intimately concerns their daily comforts, and is essential to the welfare of their families. That they would do so, we have the evidence of experience to teach us; for have not all their strikes and risings had for their object the attainment of something which in their unenlightened reasoning they have conceived to be their right—mistakenly, no doubt—but proving thereby how deep is the interest they would feel in securing the general welfare, from the moment they should come to know how completely their own true interests are involved in it?

It would appear to be the duty of every government to see that its subjects are taught their duties as men and as citizens, and thus to provide for the security of all.

#### THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON.

There was a time when the Mayor of London was really the most important officer of the metropolis of England; and persons at a distance, when they hear of his splendid entertainments given, at public cost, to the highest personages in the realm, imagine that there must still be something in the office to which the greatest possible deference should be deservedly paid. We have

often felt puzzled and ashamed to explain the real facts of the case to intelligent foreigners, who, for our inquiries respecting the municipal institutions of their country, have required, in return, some account of our own. We have been asked, "Who is the Lord Mayor?" I read in your journals that he lately gave a dinner at which nearly all the cabinet ministers were present, with the governor of the Bank of England, and the chairman of the East India Company; is it that he is a man so remarkable for talent or superior intelligence that your great men are proud of his society? "Why, —not exactly." "Is it from respect to the interests of commerce?" The Lord Mayor is perhaps the first of your London merchants? "There are greater." "It is, then, because of his position; and certainly it is a noble one—the representative of London—the metropolis of the world; a population of two millions." "Of whom not more than one fifteenth portion are under his control." "But did I not read somewhere that there were more than a hundred parishes in the city?" "All of them united not so large as the one parish of Marylebone, the vestry of which has more power over the church, the poor, and the ordinary business of local government, than all the officers of the London corporation! The respect of which you speak is paid only to a dream of the past, and to custom, the chains of which bind even a strong mind, till they are broken by a stronger." "And this chief of a subordinate department, who invites our ambassador to dine, whose accession to office, as I have heard, is honoured by a state procession, whose expenses for any one year must exceed the revenues of a German prince; this lord mayor—is only the alderman in rotation, the worthy representative of perhaps eighty resident freemen in the ward of Bridge."—*Westminster Review for May*.

#### GEMS FROM THE OLD ENGLISH POETS.

##### THE CHARACTER OF A HAPPY LIFE.

By Sir Henry Wotton [born 1568, died 1604].

How happy is he born and taught,  
That serveth not another's will;  
Whose armour is his honest thought,  
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are,  
Whose soul is still prepared for death,  
Untied unto the worldly care  
Of public fame, or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise,  
Or vice; who never understood  
How deepest wounds are given by praise;  
Nor rules of state, but rules of good;

Who hath his life from rumours freed,  
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;  
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,  
Nor ruin make oppressors great;

Who God doth late and early pray,  
More of his grace than gifts to lend;  
And entertains the harmless day  
With a religious book or friend;

This man is freed from servile bands  
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall;  
Lord of himself, though not of lands;  
And having nothing, yet hath all.

##### THE CHINESE FOOT-TORTURE.

The means taken to effect the alteration of the women's feet in China are decidedly prejudicial to the health, and frequently attended with fatal consequences. This fact was ascertained by a clever young naval surgeon who was for some time stationed at Chusan. It happened that during an excursion into the country, he one day entered a house where he found a child about eight years old very ill, and suffering under severe hectic fever; on examination, he discovered that her feet were undergoing the process of distortion; he was informed that she had been a year under this treatment. Moved by pity for the little sufferer, he proceeded to remove the bindings, and fomented the feet, which were covered with ulcers and inflammation. The change in shape had already commenced by the depression of the toes. The child was much relieved by, and evidently grateful for, his treatment. On taking his leave, he warned the mother that she would certainly lose her child if the bands were replaced; but his remonstrances were of no avail. When he returned (and this happened frequently), he always found them on again, the woman urging as an excuse that her daughter had better die than remain unmarried, and that without improved feet such a calamity would be her inevitable lot. As might be expected, the child grew worse and worse. After a longer interval than usual, he once again revisited the house, but found it untenanted, and a little coffin lying at the door, in which he discovered the body of his poor young patient. —*Lock's Closing Events of the Campaign in China*. [All well feel the monstrous character of this madness of the Chinese females; but is the waist-constriction of our own any better? The extravagance is not with us, perhaps, so very great in degree, but it is equally bad in kind, and there can be no doubt that it also causes coffins to be laid down at doors for "young patients." We fear it is an extravagance not in the way of being diminished. There has been introduced of late years an atrocious piece of machinery called the *French stay*, for casing up the frames of young ladies in an artificial and unyielding shape, in which they believe the ideal of form to be realised. Specimens of it may be seen glass-cased in windows in London, and it has also travelled into

the provinces. It leaves its victims hardly room to breathe, and entirely takes away the power of raising their arms above their heads. What they might deem its worst peculiarity, if they could judge of it at all, it makes one half of them round-shouldered, and thus adds a real deformity where it only creates an imaginary elegance. But we must cut short, remembering that this is the subject on which it is of no use to speak.]

##### INCONSISTENCIES IN OPINIONS.

Among the perplexing problems which the intricacies of the human mind present to our reflection, few are so difficult of solution as the strange inconsistencies, the palpable contradictions, so frequently observable in the opinions of the most competent reasoners, and in the conduct of the most upright men. We find individuals not only acting in direct contravention of their known opinions—that is a condition and a consequence of human frailty—but entirely unconscious of the want of conformity between their practice and their principles. We find men of the most logical understandings holding and avowing, at the same moment and with equal sincerity, doctrines which no logic can reconcile—yet wholly unaware of the incongruity. We find others pursuing a course of conduct obviously incompatible with their notions of integrity and honour—yet we know them to be incapable of intentional violations of either. It is difficult to say how these inconsistencies are to be explained or reconciled; but the knowledge of their existence in the most excellent and able men (and in all likelihood, therefore, in ourselves also) should teach us a large indulgence for the most startling incongruities, and habitual charity in the judgments we form of the moral character of others; by convincing us that what seems to us dishonesty, is in reality often a mere consequence of mental imperfection; and that the want of integrity so frequently apparent both in the dealings and the reasonings of men, is the fault rather of the head than of the heart. The secret turnings and windings of unconscious self-deception are inconceivably numerous and subtle. The strength of mind to avoid or break through all self-sophistry has been bestowed on few or none; and we believe it would be impossible to point to a single individual, with the clearest intellect and the most honest heart, who has not, at some period or other, held in connection opinions wholly incompatible and mutually destructive. — *Westminster Review*, February 1843.

##### ISLAND OF HARRIS—A BLIND TRADESMAN.

An article has lately appeared in many of the public prints, relative to a poor woman, the wife of a weaver at Cambusbarrow, in Scotland, who, although totally blind, has the rare faculty of discriminating between the different colours used in the worsted thread which passes through her hands. No doubt that poor woman possesses the sense of touch or feeling to a singularly nice degree; but it is supposed that she does so to no higher degree of perfection than it is possessed by Sandy Martin, the blind Harris tailor. Poor Sandy, now a middle-aged man, lost his sight in early youth by small pox, yet so wonderfully does he possess the sense of touch, that the loss of vision seems to cause him but little inconvenience. Of all the tailors in the island, none are in greater repute than Sandy, and deservedly too, for in reality he is surpassed by none. Although stone-blind, he places his customer before him, measures him quite scientifically, cuts his cloth with rigid economy, sews it firmly, smooths it neatly, and, in short, finishes his job to the entire satisfaction of his employer. But what is more surprising still, suppose that the cloth which he is to work upon be tartan, let it be however so fine and uncommon, he has the faculty of tracing out the stripes, squares, and angles of the fabric, by mere delicacy of touch. It is well known that tailors who have the sight of both eyes, experience at times no ordinary difficulty in cutting and finishing a Highland tartan coat, so as to make the different squares in the cloth to coalesce diagonally at the back, and to meet angularly with mathematical correctness. But in doing this blind Sandy Martin never fails, and is not known to have committed a mistake. Not satisfied with the trade of tailor, he wishes to have two strings to his bow, and acts the shoemaker also. He can cut, shape, sew, and finish a pair of shoes as firmly and neatly as most men; and his jobs, when finished, show no indications that the performer never saw what he so exquisitely handled. In one word, he fails but seldom in any work which he takes in hand. There is not a man in Harris who can more expeditiously repair a torn herring-net than poor blind Sandy. However tattered the net may be, and however scattered the broken meshes, Sandy soon discovers the existence and extent of the damage, and quickly repairs it. This poor man unquestionably furnishes a striking proof of the extent to which one sense may be improved by the deprivation of another; for undoubtedly the want of the sense of sight in this individual is the cause of the perfection to which he carries that of touch. — *Porth Courier*.

##### WHAT PLEASURE IT IS TO PAY ONE'S DEBTS.

I remember to have heard Sir T. Lyttleton make the same observation. It seems to flow from a combination of circumstances, each of which is productive of pleasure. In the first place, it removes that uneasiness which a true spirit feels from dependence and obligation. It affords pleasure to the creditor, and therefore gratifies our social affection. It promotes that future confidence which is so very interesting to an honest mind; it opens a prospect of being readily supplied with what we want on future occasions; it leaves a consciousness of our own virtue; and it is a measure we know to be right, both in point of justice and of sound economy. Finally, it is the main support of simple reputation. — *Shenstone*.

LONDON: Published, with permission of the proprietors, by W. & A. ORR, Amen Corner, Paternoster Row. Printed by Bradbury and Evans, Whitefriars.



